

ABSTRACT  
(R. Andrews, 2-77)

50-54 South Potomac Street  
Hagerstown  
Washington County, Maryland

cornerstone 1898

Decorated with foliated sculpture and Masonic emblems, the stone facade (west elevation) of this three story building is a well preserved example of late nineteenth century Romanesque influenced commercial architecture. Rectangular in shape, the facade is divided into three arcades on the upper levels and has a heavy arched entranceway with flanking fluted columns. The ground floor originally contained a shop front to the north of the entranceway but was sympathetically remodeled in later years. The facade is an important element of the streetscape and one of the best examples of Romanesque architecture in Hagerstown.

The Masonic Temple was dedicated on 8 March 1899 with the cornerstone laid nearly a year earlier on 21 April 1898. The architect was a J. H. Hunter. Construction was executed by Thomas Carnes, a Hagerstown contractor. The stonework on the facade was carved by J. R. Jackson of Hagerstown.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

WA-HAG-75  
2204835610

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Masonic Temple

AND/OR COMMON

50-54 South Potomac Street

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

50-54 South Potomac Street

CITY, TOWN

Hagerstown

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sixth

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Washington

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

\_\_\_ DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
\_\_\_ STRUCTURE  
\_\_\_ SITE  
\_\_\_ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

\_\_\_ PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
\_\_\_ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

\_\_\_ IN PROCESS  
\_\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

☒ OCCUPIED  
\_\_\_ UNOCCUPIED  
\_\_\_ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
\_\_\_ YES: RESTRICTED  
\_\_\_ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☒ NO

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_\_ AGRICULTURE  
\_\_\_ COMMERCIAL  
\_\_\_ EDUCATIONAL  
\_\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT  
\_\_\_ GOVERNMENT  
\_\_\_ INDUSTRIAL  
\_\_\_ MILITARY  
\_\_\_ MUSEUM  
\_\_\_ PARK  
\_\_\_ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
\_\_\_ RELIGIOUS  
\_\_\_ SCIENTIFIC  
\_\_\_ TRANSPORTATION  
☒ OTHER: fraternal

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Friendship Lodge No. 84, Inc. and  
other Masonic orders

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

54 South Potomac Street

CITY, TOWN

Hagerstown

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21740

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Washington County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

95 West Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Hagerstown

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Maryland Historical Trust Inventory, No. WA-6031

DATE

Date of Survey: 1970

\_\_\_ FEDERAL ☒ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Maryland Historical Trust, Shaw House, 21 State Circle

CITY, TOWN

Annapolis

STATE

Maryland

NOTE: One (1) Continuation Sheet attached.

**7 DESCRIPTION****CONDITION**☒ EXCELLENT☐ GOOD☐ FAIR☐ DETERIORATED☐ RUINS☐ UNEXPOSED**CHECK ONE**☒ UNALTERED☐ ALTERED**CHECK ONE**☒ ORIGINAL SITE☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

The building is located at 50-54 South Potomac Street in Hagerstown, Washington County, and stands on the eastern side of the street in the southern quarter of the block formed by Public Square and Antietam Street.

The Masonic Temple is a late 1890s (cornerstone dated 1898) center-city commercial brick structure with an applied stone Romanesque influenced facade (west elevation). A tall three stories high and abutting the sidewalk and neighboring structures, the Temple towers over most of the other buildings along South Potomac Street and is a prominent feature of the streetscape. The building appears to be structurally sound and covers nearly all of the approximately 63' x 240' lot.

Fairly well preserved, the facade is rectangularly shaped and terminated at the top with a modillioned cornice below a pedimented, closed roof balustrade. The upper two levels of the facade are divided vertically into three arcades with round arches which rest on capitals of pilasters formed by the store front. The first or ground story has a heavy arched doorway with flanking stubby columns in the end bay below the southern arcade and two sets of double windows below the north and middle arcades. Originally, this north and middle section of the first floor, as delineated by the small cornice with large end brackets below the second story, contained a store front with large display windows (see old photograph in Hagerstown Cracker Barrel, August 1975 issue). The verticality of the facade which is created by the height of the structure and the upper level arcades is counteracted by the alternating horizontal bands of smooth and rock-faced stone which make up the facade plane.

The entranceway has a pair of double wooden doors and a one-light transom set into a heavy, round archway flanked with stubby, fluted columns. The columns have foliated capitals and rest on pedestals of alternating rock-faced and smooth surfaces corresponding to the horizontal bands of the facade. A date stone inscribed 1898 is located in the south pedestal. The arch has a wide surround with a large keystone and a narrow border of carved work along the inner section. The keystone contains two emblems in bas-relief of Masonic organizations: the circular insignia of the Royal Arch Chapter above the triangular, compass emblem of the Blue Lodge. The wooden doors each have one large light. A narrow balcony with a balustrade of square holes hangs over the entranceway and is supported by small brackets with fluting. A band of egg-and-dart molding stretches between the brackets below the balcony.

The false pediment of the roof balustrade contains the words "Masonic Temple." below the Knights Templar emblem of a cross and crown. The emblem is flanked with foliated carving in triangular plan corresponding to the slope of the pediment. The rectangular surfaces of the balustrade have foliated carving which stop at the base of the pediment with Medievalish winged dragon-like creatures facing each other. The balustrade and cornice terminate at the outer ends with squarish, long corbels.

The second story of the facade has a pair of large rectangular windows with rectangular transoms in each bay. The row of rock-faced stones running

~~CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY~~

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

1 of 1 page

## CONTINUATION SHEET

R. Andrews, 2-77

50-54 South Potomac Street  
Hagerstown  
Washington County, Maryland

## #7. DESCRIPTION continued

across the top of the windows has foliated carved stones in the pilasters flanking the arcades. A thin, round pilaster with a foliated capital divides the windows of the middle section. Leafy carving rises above the corners of the windows in the rock-faced stone. The rectangular windows have double-hung, wooden sashes with one-over-one lights.

The top floor also has a pair of rectangular, double-hung, wooden sash windows with one-over-one lights in each arcade. These windows have half round transoms in the arches. The double-hung windows apparently are replacements for original single sash windows.

The first floor pairs of windows match those of the second floor. The "filling in" of the original shop front was done skillfully so as to match the horizontal banding of the rest of the facade.

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES    cornerstone 1898

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

J. H. Hunter, architect

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Decorated with foliated sculpture and Masonic emblems, the stone facade (west elevation) of this three story building is a well preserved example of late nineteenth century Romanesque influenced commercial architecture. Rectangular in shape, the facade is divided into three arcades on the upper levels and has a heavy arched entranceway with flanking fluted columns. The ground floor originally contained a shop front to the north of the entranceway but was sympathetically remodeled in later years. The facade is an important element of the streetscape and one of the best examples of Romanesque architecture in Hagerstown.

The Masonic Temple was dedicated on 8 March 1899 with the cornerstone laid nearly a year earlier on 21 April 1898. The architect was a J. H. Hunter (city unknown, not Hagerstown). Construction was executed by Thomas Carnes, a Hagerstown contractor. The stonework on the facade was carved by J. R. Jackson of Hagerstown.

As noted in the description, the first floor of the building originally contained a storeroom with large glass display windows. In later years, circa the 1920s, the storeroom was renovated for lodge use and the facade was remodeled though retaining the character of the facade. The Post Office was once located in this building as once was the Temple Theatre.

In great condition, the facade of this building is an important element of the streetscape and one of the best examples of Romanesque.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Daily Mail (9 March 1899), Hagerstown, Maryland.  
 The Hagerstown Cracker Barrel (August 1975), Hagerstown, Maryland.  
 Harshman, J. Lloyd. Centennial History of Friendship Lodge No. 84 A.F. and  
 A.M., Hagerstown, Maryland. n.c.: n.p., 1927, p. 72.  
 Morgan, William. Notes on file at Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis,  
 Maryland, 1970.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

The property measures approximately 62' x 240'.

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Ronald L. Andrews, Historic Preservation Consultant (mbe)

ORGANIZATION

City of Hagerstown

DATE

February 3, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

TELEPHONE

(301) 731-3200

CITY OR TOWN

Hagerstown

STATE

Maryland 21740

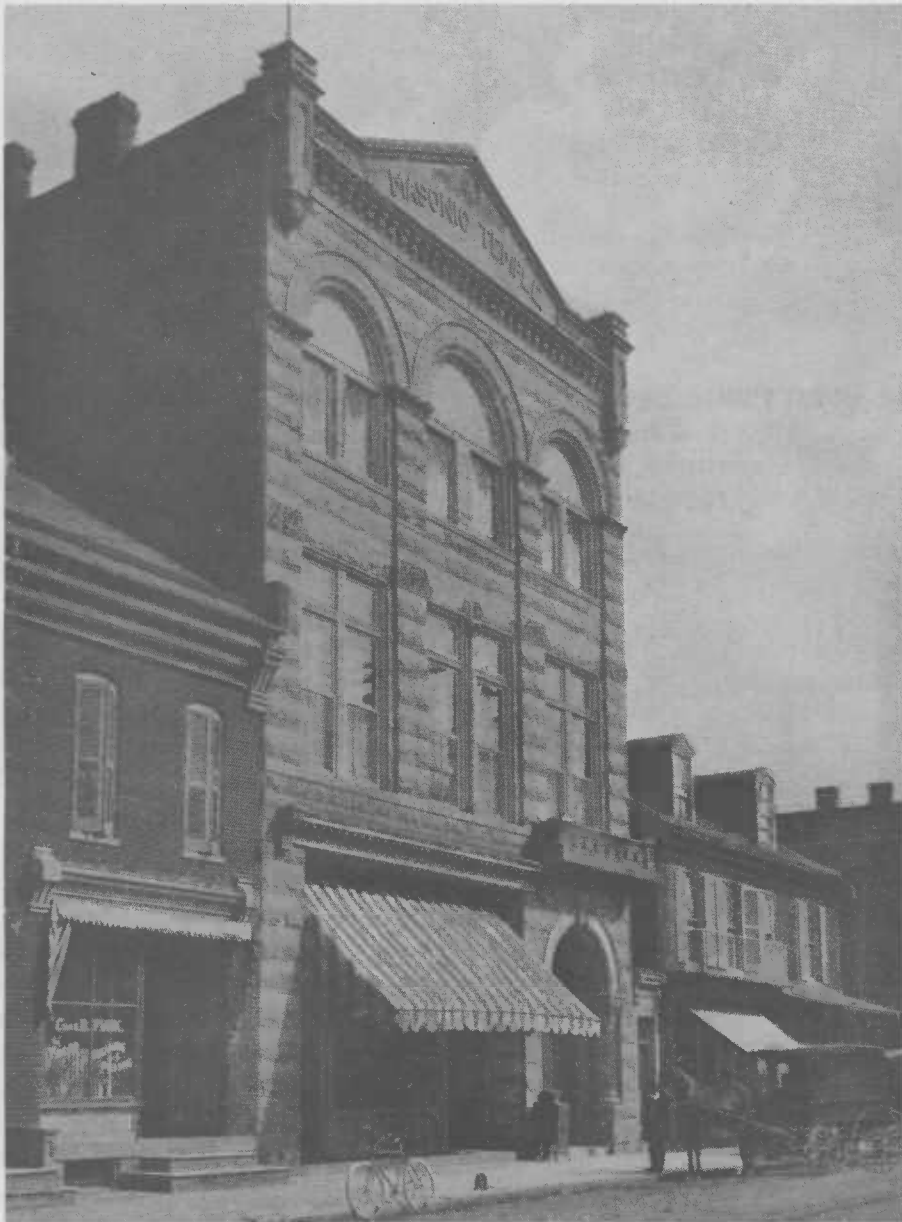
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

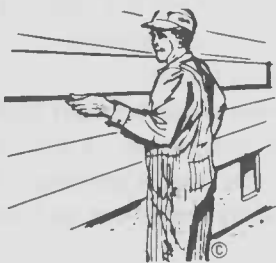
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 The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
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The Hagerstown Cracker Barrel, August 1975

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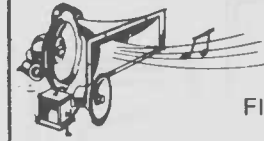
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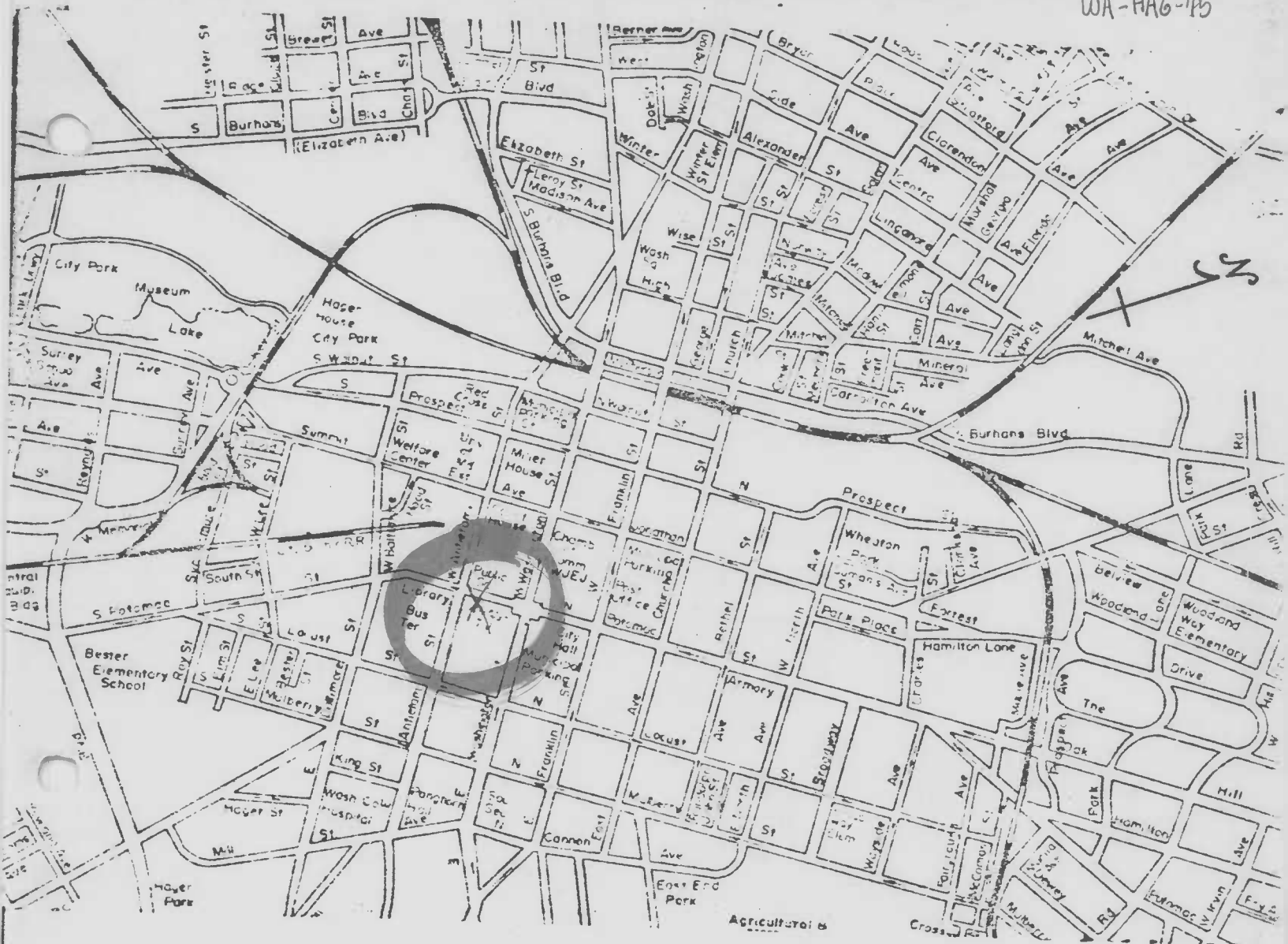
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**SITE:** 50-54 South Potomac Street  
Hagerstown  
Washington County, Maryland

**map:** City of Hagerstown,  
Washington County, Md.  
City Engineering Dept.  
July, 1970  
scale 1"=1200'



WA-HAG-78

Masonic Temple  
50-54 South Potomac St  
Hagerstown  
Washington Co., Md.

SW view

October 1975

RONALD L. ANDREWS

MASONIC TEMPLE



WA-HAG-75

Masonic Temple  
50-54 South Potomac St  
Hagerstown  
Washington Co., Md.

west elevation — detail of cornice

October, 1975

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WA-HAG-75

Masonic Temple

50-54 South Potomac St

Hagerstown

Washington Co., Md.

west elevation — detail of doorway

October 1975

RONALD L. ANDREWS